

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----023981 151430Z /40

O R 151310Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 228
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
USINT HAVANA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 0939

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, OAU, ET, SO
SUBJECT: OUTLINE OF POSSIBLE BASIS FOR SETTLEMENT IN OGADEN

REF: (A) STATE 37063, (B) KUWAIT 0878.

1. IN VIEW OF THE CONTINUING PREOCCUPATION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER WITH CONSULTATIONS ON THE FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT, I MET WITH MFA UNDERSECRETARY RASHID AL-RASHID IN COMPLIANCE WITH INSTRUCTION CONTAINED REF (A).

2. I REFERRED TO MY CONVERSATION WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER ON FEB. 13 REGARDING THE ETHIOPIAN-SOMALI CONFLICT (REF B), AND SAID THAT I WISHED TO INFORM THE GOK OF THE CURRENT US THINKING ON ELEMENTS WHICH MIGHT PROVIDE A POSSIBLE BASIS FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF THIS PROBLEM. I PROVIDED AL-RASHID WITH A PAPER CONTAINING SUBPARA. (A) THROUGH (D) OF PARA. 2, REF (A).

3. AFTER HE READ THIS CAREFULLY, I REQUESTED THE GOK REACTIONS AND VIEWS DESCRIBED IN PARA. 3, REF (A). IN A PRELIMINARY COMMENT, AL-RASHID SAID THAT, IN LIGHT OF THE INCREASING ETHIOPIAN MILITARY PUSH IN THE OGADEN AND THE ALLEGED BOMBARDMENT OF THE CIVILIAN POPULATION, HE FELT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR THE SOMALIS TO BACK DOWN AT THIS POINT. WHILE HE REGARDED THIS PROPOSAL AS PLAUSIBLE, AL-RASHID GAVE AS HIS PERSONAL REACTION THE VIEW THAT, IF SOMALI RESISTANCE WERE STRENGTHENED, IT WOULD HAVE A DISCOURAGING EFFECT ON CONTINUED SOVIET ROLE IN ETHIOPIA.

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4. I EXPLAINED THAT ESCALATING THE CONFLICT WOULD ONLY BRING MORE MISERY TO THE PEOPLE INVOLVED AND WOULD INCREASE THE ACTUAL DANGER OF THE INVASION OF SOMALIA. THEREFORE MY GOVERNMENT FELT THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO BRING THE CONFLICT TO A HALT ON THE BASIS OF A REASONABLE SETTLEMENT.

5. AL-RASHID ASKED WHETHER THE ETHIOPIANS AND SOVIETS WERE INFORMED OF OUR PROPOSED COMPROMISE ARRANGEMENT. I REPLIED THAT I ASSUMED THE ETHIOPIANS WERE SINCE NIGERIAN FOREIGN MINISTER GARBA WAS AWARE OF THESE POINTS AND HAD CONSULTED WITH THE ETHIOPIAN AND THE SOMALIS IN THE CONTEXT OF HIS MEDIATORY EFFORTS. I SAID THAT WE HAD NOT YET INFORMED THE SOVIETS OF THESE PROPOSALS ALTHOUGH IT WAS POSSIBLE THEY HAD LEARNED OF THEM THROUGH THE ETHIOPIANS. I NOTED THAT SOMALI PRES. SIAD BARRE WAS ALSO AWARE OF THE PROPOSAL, BUT STILL RESISTED ACCEPTANCE OF LESS THAN HIS MAXIMUM OBJECTIVE. ALTHOUGH NOT INSTRUCTED TO DO SO, I SUGGESTED THAT THE GOK, BECAUSE OF ITS CONTINUING CONSULTATIONS WITH PRES. BARRE WHICH WERE MENTIONED BY AL-RASHID, SEEK, IF IT AGREED WITH THE BROAD LINES OF THIS PROPOSED SETTLEMENT, TO EXERT ITS INFLUENCE ON THE SOMALI PRES. TO ACCEPT THIS FORMULATION

AS THE BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS.

6. AL-RASHID PROMISED TO INFORM THE FOREIGN MINISTER
PROMPTLY OF MY DEMARCHE AND TO PROVIDE ME WITH GOK'S
REACTION AS SOON AS IT WAS AVAILABLE.
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